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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 001412

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: JORDAN VALLEY CLOSURES LIKELY TEMPORARY

REF: JERUSALEM 1428

Classified By: DCM Gene A. Cretz, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On April 17, the Ambassador raised with Brig. Gen. (res.) Baruch Spiegel the recent closures and increased number of roadblocks in the Jordan Valley (reftel). Spiegel admitted that the IDF has increased the number of roadblocks and flying checkpoints between Nablus and Jenin, but explained that this was in response to the discovery of a suicide bomber near Hamra. In addition, he said, a Palestinian Islamic Jihad network is very active in the area, and the IDF is trying to disrupt its activities.

¶2. (C) Spiegel underscored that these steps do not represent a policy change, that they are being undertaken to deal with this specific security issue, and are likely to be temporary. He said there will be an internal GOI meeting on April 10 to discuss checkpoints and access issues.

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JONES